

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE NORTHWEST.

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BRITISH COLUMBIA has greatly risen in importance within the last few years. The gold and silver mines of Rossland and Slocan, as well as the Atlin country, are rich and extensive. They, with the far-famed Klondike to the northward, have attracted attention and capital, but above all the Spanish-American war has given to it real prominence.

Japan and China are more familiar names to the Englishman and American than they were before the war; these countries appear nearer in the line of commerce and advancement. The whole Pacific coast of North America is absorbing attention from all parts of the world and Europe and America are hurrying westward while bright young Japan comes out from the East with open arms extending to them a hearty welcome.

It is pleasant at the outset to draw special attention to that growing empire. Japan has been able manfully to seize the modern lines of progress; has been able to realize that nations or individuals who cease to compete are lost; has been able to realize that there is no middle line. It must be advancement or retrogression. As witness their fine display at the World's Fair at Philadelphia in 1876, and then again at Paris in 1889, both of which I examined carefully and with deepest attention; but above everything else, the great variety of the Japanese display at the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893 challenged the admiration of all. Japan is the only nation on that half of the globe prepared to cope with the nations on the other half. It is like a bright pillar in the Eastern seas, visible to all men and shrinking from none, but inviting all to share its progress and investigate its strong arm and warm heart for love or war. The *Orient*, an excellent Japanese magazine, is frank and earnest in its approval of the mission of Lord Beresford and of an Anglo-American-German-Japanese alliance, for the open door and the maintenance of stable government in China. Japan has well earned for itself an honored place in the highest family of nations, and wherever it is not so acknowledged it is only for want of true information in regard to the real merits of the empire.

British Columbia, with two thousand miles of coast line, for-

merly the back door of British America, is now becoming the front door. Its position is unique and commanding, and, in the progress of the world, vastly important. It is as large as England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Portugal combined, with a climate not unlike those countries. It has an area of 383,000 square miles, backed by half a continent extending eastward to the Atlantic ocean, all under the benign sway of the much-loved Queen. British Columbia's great mountain ranges look out on the boundless waters of the Pacific. This ocean is full of deepest concern to thoughtful men of all nations, who, with strained vision, survey its world of waters, glorious in extent in the richness of its inhabited islands as well as in the present and prospective extent of its commerce.

It is over forty years since my first voyage on the Pacific. There was but little commerce then with the Orient, yet there were settlements on the coasts of California, Mexico, Oregon and British Columbia. Now a general strife has set in among the nations as to which shall determine and control the illimitable fields of commerce in the far East, which shall have most to say about a new map of Asia. British Columbia, more English than England, stands north of the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, while Uncle Sam owns all southward to the Mexican line. This neck of water is fortified by the British, and will doubtless soon be by the Federal Government; then these two friendly powers will control the commanding situation, firmly locking or unlocking the straits at will.

Once inside the sealed doorway, to the north on the British side looms up for two hundred miles the expansive Gulf of Georgia, with its charming islands and beautiful cities of Victoria and Vancouver. Victoria is built on the site of an Indian village and camping ground. In America this is all that need be said to establish its beauty, its healthfulness and the fertility of its soil.

Many years ago in cruising around the coast I chanced upon an old seaman named Dan Harris, living in a hut on the opposite side of the Sound. He told me he had been cast away on the coast, where he remained. He said at one time he had gone to Victoria to purchase a wife at the Indian village. A father there had many daughters, but he refused to sell one alone, while if Harris would take two he would reduce the price. Two were purchased, placed in the canoe and brought home. Harris said the girls quarreled and he was forced to trade one off for a cooking stove, and that it was the best cooking stove ever brought to the coast.

The Hudson Bay Company built large warehouses at Victoria and it remained many years one of the chief posts of that powerful

corporation. It is now the capital of British Columbia. Its legislative buildings are remarkable for architectural beauty. I was informed by a member of the government that the buildings cost \$1,000,000. The city has a population of twenty-five thousand. It is built on an arm of the sea in a commanding position, affording a fine view of the Olympia mountains, the Straits of San Juan de Fuca and surrounding mountain ranges. The people are wealthy, very English and leisurely. They are exceedingly kind and hospitable to strangers. The harbor is visited by ocean steamers from all parts of the world and trading ships ply between the cities of the inclosed basin on both sides of the boundary line.

Vancouver is really a charming young city, built at the western limit of the Canadian Pacific railway. The city is twelve years old, but while yet so young has all the proportions and advantages of maturity. There is no modern facility for health, comfort or happiness withheld from the 25,000 inhabitants residing at Vancouver.

The gigantic Canadian Pacific railway, commencing on the eastern verge of the continent and terminating at Vancouver, with a score of branches and feeders, has in actual operation over 4,000 miles of trackage, with an efficiency of management equal if not superior to any other railway in America.

The terminus of this immense system at the growing side of the continent would alone guarantee the greatness of Vancouver. The situation of the city is delightful, the elevation being abundant for excellent drainage, with a gradual slope down to the docks, railway stations and other like buildings on the seashore.

In its capacious, well-protected harbor may be seen ships from the inland waters of Puget Sound and the Gulf of Georgia, as well as from Asia and the islands of the sea ; indeed, from every quarter of the globe.

On the American side of the straits southward for one hundred miles stretch out the blue waters of Puget Sound, adorned with the cities of Whatcom, Tacoma and Olympia, but above all, the stately metropolitan city of Seattle, rising like Tunis on the Mediterranean sea, street above street, block above block, till from the summit a view of surpassing loveliness breaks upon the bewildered stranger.

At his feet, to the eastward, Lake Washington comes in view, a delightful body of pure, transparent, fresh water, thirty miles in length, navigated by pleasure craft of all shapes and dimensions, from the Indian dug out to the large passenger steamer, the undulating banks being dotted with pleasure resorts, residences, fruit orchards and an abundance of flowers. Numerous cable lines and electric lines furnish rapid transit from the business center of the

city out to the enchanting scenes in and about this beautiful lake, while to the westward is the expansive harbor of Seattle, crowded with vessels of every country, furnishing, upon the whole, a rare scene of joyous social comfort, together with commercial progress, going hand in hand to greater triumphs in the near future.

When inside the Straits of Fuca, the Gulf of Georgia to the north and Puget Sound to the south afford to the two nations a magnificent inland sea, in which are a score of inhabited islands, these islands also having safe and convenient harbors, thriving villages, large orchards, well-tilled farms and an abundance of rich foliage.

There are six railways now operating trains night and day, three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, across the continent of America, with from ten to forty large cars in each train, laden with freight and with thousands of stalwart men and women hurrying to the milder climate and promised wealth west of the Rocky Mountains.

Three of the most southern of these lines of railway at one point or another have connections with the three most northern, while the latter three terminate in the cities of Puget Sound and the Gulf of Georgia. Awaiting the arrival of these continental trains are great ocean steamers of four competing companies, numerous tramp steamers and large merchant ships and transports, ready at once to deliver their cargoes, not to ships of the desert, but into hundreds of cars of these overland trains ready to receive them, as well as to receive whole train loads of fruit, shingles, timber, wine, hops and honey, products of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, to be delivered at Montreal, New York, Liverpool, Paris or Berlin, while the forest of sea vessels there waiting are at once reloaded with wheat, flour, fruit, wines, lumber, hardware and hundreds of other productions suitable for Oriental trade.

In view of this enormous present and of the prospective traffic, 'tis needless to invoke prophetic aid to tell of the stupendous commercial results awaiting the western portions of British Columbia and the State of Washington, and what part this great land-locked portion of the ocean fronting upon them is to play in the Eastern drama, the curtain of which has only risen upon the commercial world.

When we consider further, that owing to the conformation of the globe and the direction of the ocean currents, the Straits of Fuca are much nearer to Yokohama than is San Francisco, the result is more apparent. For example: A tourist leaving Yokohama will have to travel by way of the Straits 10,050 miles before reach-

ing Liverpool, while by the way of San Francisco the distance between the two points would be 11,280 miles, the former route being a saving of over 1,200 miles. In fact, from the whole of Australasia there is a saving of distance. From Sydney to Liverpool by way of San Francisco is 13,032 miles, while between these points by way of the Straits of Fuca the distance is 11,650. The same will apply in a greater degree to Japan and China.

In view of all this, is it not physically manifest that the two nations owning and controlling the Straits of Fuca, with their allies, are to hold a dominating power in navigating the Pacific ocean? But, it is said, these two nations may not continue to be friends, then what? The answer is that there are a thousand reasons why they should continue to be friends and not a single substantial reason against it.

It is said that George III. hired Hessians and Indians to fight the rebels in America in 1776 and that this has always been taught in American school books as a reason for hating England. The answer to this is, that that was during a time of war and it really made no difference who were fighting if it had to be done, and as further answer by way of reply, that during the rebellion in the Southern States, Mr. Lincoln, as a war project, gave freedom to three million black slaves in the South, where every household, every workshop, every corn-field and sugar plantation had their stalwart workers liberated against their masters, and a savage, irresponsible power hurled upon the devoted heads of people who were, as they thought, fighting for their rights. Was Lincoln wrong? No, it was a time of war. Lincoln was right. It was his sworn duty to maintain the integrity of the United States and nobly he performed the divine mission. The South fought bravely, but it failed. Does the North hate it now? No, a thousand times, no. Southern bravery challenged the admiration of the world. At this moment Southrons are loved and trusted by the nation as they never were before.

It was the sworn duty of King George to maintain the integrity of the British Empire. If he had not done so he would have been despised by posterity. This is what might well be told in the school books of America. Loyalty to one's country by the sovereign in power is the highest form of patriotism, but a legacy of hatred is a poor legacy at best. It might be told that the English, Irish and Scotch of America rebelled against the English, Irish and Scotch of the motherland, and that while both fought bravely the Americans gained a noble independence. They might be told that there is not one person living to-day who took part in that war; that there can be no personal feeling to avenge; that a hundred years is such a

limitation of time as to blot out all legal right to remember such an event; and that as to the War of 1812, it was nobody's fault and no results by treaty ever came out of it, so that as between the nations it is not to be considered. In a word, as to the family fight among our progenitors, if George Washington were here to-day, he would be the first to say: "Clasp hands in friendship now, for that old fight was really an act of duty on both sides; therefore, while preserving its chivalrous historic acts to the nation, let all ill-will be swept away." The grounds of love and friendship between the two nations are immutable and cannot in a short article like this be adverted to at length. It may be said, however, that there is but one English language; these two nations have an equal right to it, as they have to the revered name of Shakespeare, who was master of it. Language brings similarity of thought, similarity of laws and similarity of sentiment. The old common law of England is now in full force in most of the States of the Union. The use of it is as much the right of the American people as is the honored name of Blackstone, the expounder of that law.

It is manifest that while two governments administer the affairs of the two nations the people are as much one people as they ever were. True, the man in New York is different from the man in London, but no more different than he is from the man in Boston, San Francisco or New Orleans. The man in London differs from the man in Boston, but no more than the man in Birmingham, Belfast or Glasgow. The affinities of these two nations are as strong as any of the distinctive parts of any one of the nations is strong; as a whole, both morally and I may say physically, they are one, as much as members of the same family are one. All treaties, contracts or stipulations for alliances are stupid mockeries in comparison with the natural and artificial reasons holding them together. When Mr. Adams, the first American Minister at the Court of St. James, presented his credentials, King George said he had always resisted the separation but would now be the first to extend friendship to the new nation, and faithfully has that pledge been kept to this hour.

But it is said that during the war for the Union in America English sympathies were with the South. This is not true. When the Mason and Slidell affair arose giving great offense to England and when Lord John Russell had a dispatch prepared tantamount to a declaration of war, Prince Albert, then a member of the Privy Council, with his own hand changed the wording of it so as to breathe feelings of kindness and consideration to the American Republic. And again, when the war was over the British Govern-

ment agreed to pay under an award and did pay \$15,000,000 damages done to American commerce by the *Alabama*, a vessel built in British waters. But, above all, if England had acknowledged the independence of the South, which she might have done, as the South had an organized government in full force and operation, all Europe might have followed in the wake, and there is no telling what the consequences would have been.

But what is to be said of the Spanish War? At the very outset England declared coal contraband of war. This was far reaching in its effects, for a steamship leaving Spanish waters would have exhausted most of its fuel before reaching the scene of action, and when there no coal was to be obtained. Who can tell the stupendous effect this had on the conduct of the war?

But England has no monopoly of these acts of friendship. In 1794, when France was at war with England, America refused to side with the former country although France had given substantial aid during the Revolution and although France made violent efforts to have her come to her aid. Thus always has it been that the two countries have never joined a foreign power against each other.

That they have been separate in administration has been a great good to themselves and to the world. They have been active competitors for justice and advancement. They have been peaceful rivals in the march of commerce and science. This rivalry has from time to time aroused feelings of dislike but no more than the dislike between parts of the United Kingdom or parts of the United States. Now they have both grown large and commanding; the magnificent republic is the republic of the world. It is big enough, strong enough and wise enough to be proud of itself and the motherland, and in generous chivalry to salute Victoria, Queen of the English-speaking race.

Alfred Austin purchased immortality by his composition of the following lines at the outset of the late war:

THE LAUREATE TO AMERICA.

"Oh what is the voice I hear
On the winds of the Western Sea?
Sentinel, listen from out Cape Clear
And say what the voice may be.
'Tis a proud, free people calling loud to a people
Proud and free.

"And it says to them: 'Kinsmen, hail,
We severed have been too long.
Now let us have done with a worn out tale,
The tale of an ancient wrong,
And our friendship last long as love doth last,
And be stronger than death is strong.'"

The unspoken alliance between these two powers is stronger than clamps of iron ; it is a coming together of involuntary forces, by common likes, by common loves and from similar lines of thought and action. The old love is doubly strong when it returns after an enforced separation. Now after backs turned for a century, with erect form and glowing eye, face to face, let each as equals grasp hands as only brothers can, for the fight is over to the end of time. The two nations can say : "Since last we met great deeds have followed in our steps. Millions who were held in slavery by both have thrown their shackles off, and now in sight of God and Man can move and act as free as we, making our common sphere the field of personal hope, of personal liberty, with a thousand other kindred helps for man, these all we carry where'er we twain may go."

The two nations are standing side by side on the Pacific looking out over the wide expanse, planning not what peoples may be conquered, not what cities may be burned and plundered, not what captives may follow in their train, but what peace, strength and confidence may come to others who join hands with them in the brilliant field of enlightenment with or without war. It is no charity or justice to stand idly by while a nation in clear view is living in squalid idleness, practicing loathsome customs, shrinking from the outer world, lest light reveal oppression and tyranny to the helpless within their power. In such a case war is not a crime, but a fountain of good. It purifies the heart with well-earned peace and brings out in strong relief the heroic side of life.

In this great mission what part is British Columbia to play ? The Province is full of iron, coal and precious metals. Its timbers are unsurpassed. Its fisheries are practicably inexhaustible, with bays, harbors and rivers adjacent to all sorts of shipbuilding material. Add to this a strong northern climate, tempered by ocean currents, a soil producing the finest cereals, fruits, flowers and vines, and one can have some conception of the part this great Province is to play in the opening drama, for not only is it laden down with these blessings but it has kept fairly abreast in enterprise and national improvements.

It is not disputed that, as a continental undertaking under one management, there is no superior to the Canadian Pacific railway. It has a continuous trunk line from Halifax on the Atlantic to Vancouver on the Pacific, with New York and Boston closely connected in the East, and San Francisco, Portland, Tacoma and Seattle in the West. It has established a tourist route around the world. At Vancouver its great Empress steamers are waiting to take on board

passengers for Yokohama, Hong Kong and Singapore, and on round by other connections to any point of embarkation, so that what was once a work of years is now a mere tourist's holiday.

This railway system was largely subsidized by Government. It has always been the policy of England to assist private undertakings by subsidy rather than embark as a government in speculative enterprises. The people are keenly alive to their material interests, and are generous in order to induce private capital to launch out in ventures of this kind.

British Columbia is to be one of the British termini of the great submarine telegraph system of the Pacific world, of which Sir Sanford Fleming, on behalf of imperial interests, is the chief promoter. This too will receive substantial government aid.

President McKinley is also moving in the same direction. This will be the first cord to bind the South Sea Islands to the network of wire now linking in conversation other parts of the globe. When accomplished, these two nations will have made the English language familiar in the remotest island of the sea and will have rounded up their present efforts by extending the greatest civilizer of modern times.